



Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

2021 April Newsletter



Risen Lord,
fill us with new life
through your resurrection power
that we may share your love
with those who live in darkness;
that we may share your peace
with those who live in fear;
that we may share your joy
With those who live in sorrow.
Risen Lord, live in us
that we may shine
with the light of Christ.

ELECTIONS for 2022 - 25

Hazel Williams

2021 is the last year of this Triennial and it does not seem over two years since I became **Ely MU Diocesan President**. Much has happened - most of it totally unexpected. I have used my telephone and the post more than ever, not to mention e-mails and Zoom (which I had never heard of last March)! Last month I was nominated for another three years as president by the trustees and am delighted to have been elected. I have carried out only one 'engagement' in person over the last year and only a few using Zoom in the Diocese, but have tried to keep you all up-to-date with what has been happening via the newsletter. This, like Topsy, has grown because although there were no events to let you know about in advance, task-group leaders and many members have contributed articles. I hope you have enjoyed having something to read and help you retain contact with the 'outside world'.

Thursday prayer was another event that had to change, as the Cathedral and churches were closed. It has been a delight to hear how many enjoy having the short Thursday Prayer service sent or delivered to them each month as well as those who are enjoying it on Zoom, who could not have made the journey to attend in person, even when it was possible to do so.

The next stage of elections is about to start with **nominations for trustees** for the next three years. Some are intending to stand for another three years but others have come to the end of their six years so are unable to stand again, and others are moving on. Nomination papers will be sent to all branch leaders. If you are interested in taking a more active role in the diocese, beyond your branch, please ask your branch leader for the papers. At the end of the newsletter there is information outlining the roles of trustees, as well as the areas that each task group covers. Many who are interested come in through this route initially if there is a role in a task group that they would enjoy and like to help with. Nominations need to be in to Ros Wright, MU diocesan secretary by Monday April 12th.

Faith In Action – Jean Webb Task Group Coordinator

It is always good to receive messages of thanks and I have 3 recent ones I would like to share with you, for it is your enthusiasm, generosity and skill that has made them possible.

The first is from Cambridge Women's Aid, I know several branches sent gift vouchers at Christmas. The other 2 Refuges we support would say something similar, and are always most grateful for anything we provide (although often restricted for storage space).

"Thank you so much for sending us the vouchers. All the vouchers you send are passed on to women who either have no or low income and are therefore unable to buy enough food or necessary items for themselves and their families. A voucher is very well received as it does not carry the stigma that some women feel is attached to food banks. It means that the woman can buy what she needs and what she wants - rather than what might be available at a food bank.

Sometimes the women will use supermarket vouchers to purchase school uniform items for their children. All school aged children who come into refuge will start at a new school and they often need to get a few new items.

Part of our role is to support women to access their entitlement to benefits, but there can often be a considerable delay between making the claim and receiving the payment. Many women will come into refuge with virtually no money, and often with debt, through no fault of their own. It goes without saying, that once a woman has a safe roof over her head and has funds to support herself and her children, she can take the first steps to starting a new safer life.

There is no doubt that the vouchers you have given will make a considerable difference to the women who receive them".

We had a mention in the March Newsletter of Future Care Solutions, one of the Care companies we have provided with Soft Twiddle Muffs. Alongside a picture of a Twiddle Muff they wrote –

"This is a thick hand muff with bits and bobs (twiddles) attached inside and out. It is designed to provide a stimulation activity for clients with dementia, who often have restless Behaviour. The muffs provide a wonderful source of visual, tactile and sensory stimulation. They are made for us by members of the Mothers' Union of Ely Diocese. Thank you all very much."

Recently I have been asking for some lap blankets for Hinchingsbrooke Frailty Unit. Sherly, the Frailty Specialist Nurse wrote-

Thanks for all the help, and please do mention our thanks to your Knitters for the great job they are doing. Also, if we could have some more Twiddle muffs please, that would be great.



So, we continue to knit, crochet, collect, fundraise to put our Faith Into Action. Thank you all.

Beautifully made, colourful lap blankets made by members of Balsham branch, with our diocesan labels added. Ready to go to Hinchingsbrooke.



Somersham Branch News - Barbara Hoy Branch Leader.

I am very proud that all Somersham members have paid their subscription this year. I believe that success is because during the Lockdown the members have been sent every month a copy of the MU Diocese Newsletter, plus any other information in which they could be interested. Grateful acknowledgements come back by return email.

Ros has produced and sent a Large Print copy of the Newsletter that are printed out and hand delivered to non-computer members. The large print versions are delivered to our members who struggle to read with bad eyesight.

In these difficult times it is *so important* that our members feel very involved, even with no meetings. Every now and again I will write a friendly note for membership distribution. Of course, when there is a seasonal item such as Advent or Easter I might also write a prayer.

As a branch we have been keeping Maureen Haigh busy over the past year - whenever we were not locked down. Two Somersham members in particular have been working very hard on collecting items for the various charities supported by Mothers' Union. This involves storing, laundering, sorting, knitting, household items and fabrics, baby clothes, large and small baby equipment; in fact all items for Ely Diocese Projects. Maureen has expressed her gratitude for the many donations and has faithfully collected all from our two local members.

Thankfully there is 'light at the end of the tunnel' as they say and we look forward to the Covid restrictions being gradually lifted after Easter. It may be some while before we get back to some normality regarding meetings but when we do, then I know that my committee and I will have some careful planning to do.

Many prayers will be said to underpin our hopes. With Christian love and blessings.

Farcet Branch News – Veronica Woodcock-Ellard Branch Leader

Our church St. Mary's had a Christmas Tree Festival before lockdown and our MU branch entered a tree decorated with knitted crosses with a prayer on the reverse, baubles and battery operated lights. The idea of the crosses came from the autumn edition of Families First.

In January I sent a knitted cross to each one of our members (20 in total). Many said how they had used them in prayer, and how thankful they were to receive them. We have now sent a basket full of knitted crosses to our city hospital in Peterborough. A chaplain said how happy he was to receive them and he would pass them on to patients who needed one to give comfort in prayer.



Throughout this year I have made copies of the MU newsletters and sent them to each member, including a letter from myself and prayers, to help cheer up my members and letting them know they are not forgotten.

In between we have telephoned each other. What would we have done without our telephones this last year?

Also through the year our members have knitted squares for blankets and knee blankets. Sue, our branch secretary sews them together for us. Bless her.

Let us hope we can soon get together and socialise and get back to some normality.

God Bless and best wishes from Farcet Mothers' Union branch.

Annual Report for 2020

This report, which also goes to the charity commission is being sent as a separate attachment with this newsletter. It gives all the information about our governance and activities over the last year. The accounts for the year will be sent when they are finalised.

ROLE DESCRIPTIONS FOR TRUSTEES

DIOCESAN PRESIDENT

The rôle of the Diocesan President is to lead and represent Mothers' Union in the diocese and beyond. The Diocesan President should have a strong faith and the vision to lead the Mothers' Union into the future, embracing both the global vision and the grass roots membership, and have the enthusiasm and commitment to use the gifts and skills of members. They should be able to plan strategically, work in partnership, use effective contemporary communication skills, and embrace the links with the Diocese and its vision.

FOUR ARCHDEACONRY VICE-PRESIDENTS

There will be two Vice-Presidents for each archdeaconry. Together with the Diocesan President they will further the work of Mothers' Union in the Diocese, initiate events and support local leadership as well as getting to know the members in their archdeaconry. As a Trustee they will fulfil the rôle as required by the constitution and work as a team with the other Trustees.

FOUR TASK GROUP LEADERS

1. Praying our Faith 2. Faith in Action 3. Finance & Administration 4. Fundraising & Communication

The task leaders will work with the President and Trustees to further the work of Mothers' Union in the diocese, leading and supporting the work of their group, ensuring that members in the diocese are kept informed of their work. As a Trustee they will fulfil the rôle as required by the constitution, organise and chair meetings of their group and prepare an annual group budget.

Non-Trustee Task Group Activity Leaders

1. Praying our Faith Task Group Members

- Worldwide • Prayer • Emergency Prayer • Chaplain • Clergy liaison • Campaigning

2. Faith in Action Task Group Members

- Away from it all holidays • Prison support • Local initiatives • Supporting parents • Wisbech project

3. Finance & Administration Task Group Members

- Treasurer • Gift Aid administrator • Finance Administrator • Safeguarding co-ordinator • MU Diocesan Secretary

4. Fundraising & Communication Task Group Members

- MU Enterprises • Grapevine • Cathedral Display • Diocesan Members • Website, social media

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MU Thursday Prayer on Zoom (start at 11am)

Time: Apr 15, 2021 10:45 AM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88623348036>

ID 886 2334 8036 (no password)